



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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U K R A I N E

Ukraine Remembers HIV/AIDS Victims

Ukraine remembered its HIV/AIDS victims on May 21 with a memorial service at the HIV/AIDS memorial site in Kyiv, located just outside the historic Monastery of the Caves. USAID Mission Director Earl Gast joined Minister of Health Yuri Polyachenko and 1996 Olympic gold medalist in gymnastics, Liliya Podkopayeva, in noting that much still needs to be done to stem the growing HIV/AIDS problem. The event was organized by the People Living with HIV/AIDS Network, which USAID supports.

Mr. Gast explained that while the availability of anti-retroviral drugs has increased dramatically in the last four years, and today nearly 3,000 people are enjoying the benefits the medication offers, more effort needs to be expended to make the drug available to more people.



Commemorating the victims of HIV/AIDS

At the close of the ceremony, which began with a 15-minute prayer service, dignitaries placed flowers at the foot of the memorial, and the audience released hundreds of balloons into the bright blue sky above the gleaming golden cupolas of the monastery's churches.

Interns Trained with USAID Assistance Ready to Work for Ukraine's Well-Being

USAID's Executive Intern Program graduated its first group of participants during a send-off ceremony at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Kyiv on May 16. Twenty-three current and future civil servants received certificates of completion after spending the last several months serving internships in the Ukrainian government and spending time abroad. The National Democratic Institute launched the USAID-sponsored program in September 2005 to support the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in increasing its management capacity.



DCM Sheila Gwaltney (second from the right) listens to Interns' impressions

After passing through a stringent selection process, those selected for the program attended a month-long intensive training program. Participants then traveled to either Lithuania, Latvia or Poland, where they spent a month working alongside civil servants within the governments of those countries to gain practical skills and develop deeper insights into the principles and practical execution of democratic governance in the new EU member states.

Upon their return to Ukraine, the 23 interns began three-month internships in the Ukrainian government, during which time each individual was also required to complete post-exchange coursework and written assignments, as well as a

final policy paper. The 23 policy papers have been compiled into a book on reforming Ukraine's civil service sector.

Socialist Party Leader Meets with USAID Interns

On May 11, 2006, 39 participants of USAID's Parliamentary Internship Program met with MP and Socialist Party leader Oleksandr Moroz in the Verkhovna Rada Office Building.

Mr. Moroz, one of Ukraine's leading legislators who was Parliament chairman from 1994-1998, pointed out that the greatest achievement of the Internship Program has been to give young Ukrainians from every oblast of the country the opportunity to participate and learn first hand about the legislative process. He noted that the Program is strengthening the efficiency of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada and in many cases bringing new staff members to governmental agencies.



Oleksandr Moroz (center) enjoys a light-hearted moment with USAID Parliamentary Program interns

The Parliamentary Internship Program was founded in 1995 by the Association of Former Members of Congress with the aim of involving young professionals in the legislative process and promoting democratic principles in the Ukrainian parliament. In the last decade, 665 Ukrainian students and young political leaders have participated in the program, working in 28 parliamentary committees and departments of the Verkhovna Rada Secretariat. Some 40% of the

interns who have completed the course have remained in government service, and about 30% of them continue to work in the Rada. Many others work for NGOs and private businesses.

Production Technologies for Early Cabbage Demonstrated in Zakarpattya

USAID's Agricultural Marketing Project (AMP), implemented by Land O'Lakes, conducted a field day in the village of Zarichya, Transcarpathia Oblast, on April 26 to advise farmers on the latest growing and marketing techniques for cabbage crops. Agricultural producers from the surrounding cities of Irshava, Mukachevo, Berehovo, Vinohradiv, and Uzhhorod participated in the event.



Field Day at the Cabbage Greenhouse

Four leading seed companies presented new seed hybrids not found in this region and explained new production techniques to the farmers who attended. AMP specialists and other qualified experts from Kyiv- and Lviv-based wholesale companies and the VOPAK supermarket chain discussed marketing techniques, while suppliers showed the latest plant protection assets, drip irrigation systems and other modern agro-technologies.

Center for Disabled Children in Sevastopol Fills Special Education Void

The Eurasia Foundation concluded a project with the Center for Support to Disabled Children on April 11 to help it improve its management and professional development capabilities. The Center is a non-governmental organization for social rehabilitation of the mentally challenged, which for the last two years received USAID funding through the Eurasia Foundation.

Currently, there is no special education system for mentally disabled children in Ukraine, and the public school system is ill equipped to teach them. Thus, disabled young adults have difficulty finding jobs. Many disabled children also grow up in single-parent families, and single mothers have trouble balancing work and care for their special needs children.

Today, fifteen young people under the age of 25 regularly attend the center whose physical premises were provided by the Sevastopol municipal government. Its teachers and social workers along with five parents have attended professional training on working with mentally disabled children. In the last two years, the center has developed 13 new testing and education methodologies, including educational software. It has partnered with local businesses for laundry, printing, sorting and packaging services, which have provided employment for some of the center's clients and members of their families.

For all its achievements, the center is not yet sustainable and faces considerable challenges. The organization recently received a grant from USAID-funded Ukrainian Citizen Action Network, implemented by the Institute for Sustainable Communities, with which it plans to develop an income-generating social enterprise program.

Upcoming Events

June 2, Maternal and Infant Health Project Talk show on Effective Perinatal Practices in Ukraine, with USAID Mission Director participating, Fifth Channel, 10 p.m., Kyiv.

June 6, Municipal Budget Reform Project in Ukraine (MBR), MBR Selected Cities Signing Ceremony, Kyiv.

June 9, BIZPRO, Round table on "Streamlining Permit-Issuing Procedures in the Sphere of Economic Activities," Kyiv.

BELARUS

USAID's BIZPRO project recently conducted an international conference for Belarus practicing accountants, academia, and government officials. More than 160 participants, including international experts and speakers from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the United States and Great Britain took part. The professional community of accountants and auditors in Belarus along with international experts discussed the prospect of introducing International Financial Reporting Standards, the international practices of certification and activities of professional associations of accountants and auditors promoting CAP/CIPA (Certified Accounting Practitioner/Certified International Professional Accountant) program.



Belarusian CAP Certificate holders listen to congratulatory remarks by Dmiry Shutz, ECCAA Executive Director

Representatives of the Eurasian Council of Certified Accountants and Auditors and the local Association of Bookkeepers and Auditors awarded CAP-level certificates to the first 38 Belarusian CAP-level graduates.

USAID sponsored the conference as part of the CAP/CIPA training program being implemented under the BIZPRO project. Since April 2005, over 400 Belarusian specialists have been trained in Financial Accounting, Managerial Accounting and Tax and Law. Since the inception of the project, 337 Belarusian professional have passed the exams.

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